

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph [0001] with the following amended paragraph:

[0001] This application is a continuation of co-pending U.S. patent application Serial No. 09/762,410, filed May 17, 2001, now U.S. Patent No. 6,722,443, which is the National Stage of International Application No. PCT/GB99/02605, filed August 9, 1999, which claims priority to Great Britain Application No. 9817246.3, filed on August 8, 1998. Each of the aforementioned related patent applications is herein incorporated by reference in their entirety.

Please replace paragraph [0017] with the following amended paragraph:

[0017] Preferably, the friction reducing means is a low friction coating applied to the filter sheets, such as a PTFE-based material such as TEFLON™ ~~Teflon (trade mark)~~. In other embodiments, a friction-reducing lubricant, such as high temperature grease, may be provided. Alternatively, sheets of low friction material may be placed between the filter sheets and the tubing.

Please replace paragraphs [0025] and [0026] with the following amended paragraphs:

[0025] To facilitate make-up and backing-off of the connection 10, the ends of the filter plates 16 are provided with an expandable make-up protection sleeve [[32]] which prevents the overlapping plates on either the pin 28 or the box 30 from snagging on the opposing filter plates when the pin and box are rotated relative to one another.

[0026] To facilitate expansion of the tubing, the filter plates 16, 18 are provided with a coating 34 of a low-friction material, in this case a PTFE-based material such as TEFLON™ ~~Teflon~~. This coating facilitates relative movement of the plates 16, 18 and the tubing 20, 22, 24, 26, and minimizes the risk of tearing of the filter plates 16, 18 as the tubing sections are made up and expanded.

Please replace the abstract with the following amended abstract: